PUDUKKOTTAI STATE
NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

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LECTURE CXXVI.

ITALY.

(From a B. B. C. Talk).

ON the credit side, Italy, in this war, has gained a few square miles around Mentone, the holiday resort on the French coast; a couple of barren border districts in Western Greece; and an Italian prince has been made King of Croatia but has not yet dared to set foot in his kingdom. On the debit side, Italy has lost half her imports and exports. Her war production to-day is little more than half of what it was three years ago. Her African Empire has crumbled to pieces and, worst of all, Italy herself has come virtually under German control.

To-day this question of German control is certainly the most vital and crucial problem, because it affects all walks of Italian life. Nazi officials are sprawling in all Italian ministries. Plain clothes Gestapo and S. S. officers, arriving in batches of fifty or a hundred, spread themselves over the country. Officially they are 'undergoing special colonial training'. German engineers and technicians hold key positions in the more important factories, mainly in chemical and armament works. The Germans have established a rate of exchange between the German reichsmark and the Italian lira to their own advantage, and they are thus able to buy up stocks of many goods sorely needed inside Italy. Specially appointed German-Italian committees are taking stock of all plants and machinery in Italian key industries. **Some people say that they are preparing for a wholesale transfer of Italian factories to Germany.**

ITALIAN BUSINESSMEN'S GRAVE FEARS.

At a recent meeting of Italian businessmen at Pisa grave fears were expressed about the Nazis' future plans for Italy. Some Italians fear that the

Nazis want to smash all Italian industries so laboriously built up in the years of Mussolini's big self-sufficiency drive. These fears and doubts were certainly not allayed by recent Nazi statements about German war aims. Italians must have heard of the sensational article by Gestapo leader Werner Best, who mapped out a plan for Germany's future rule in Europe and **allotted to Italy the place of a German colony.**

A prominent Fascist paper recently reproached Germany for not paying any attention to the real conditions in Italy. Italy, so the paper said, has lost its bargaining power in negotiations with other countries. Since Germany grabs all that Italians have to give, Italy cannot fulfil her obligations towards third countries in return for goods imported from them. More than 600,000 skilled Italian workers are toiling in the Reich—on East Prussian fields, in Ruhr mines and Rhineland factories. Not only manual workers, but clerks and typists have been conscripted to work in the Reich.

To-day Germany is the destination of many Italian men and women in need of work and livelihood, just as the United States was the destination of the masses of Italian emigrants before and immediately after the last war. With the difference, however, that to-day the Italians are forced and conscripted to work in a country they do not like.

FOOD PROBLEM IS VERY SERIOUS.

The food problem is now very serious in Italy—it is probably worse than anywhere in Europe, except perhaps Greece and Finland. If you want to grasp the whole relationship between the junior and the senior partners of the Axis, you only have to compare Italian and German food rations. The Italian housewife gets only half as much bread a week as her opposite number in Germany. She gets one-third as much meat, just over half as much sugar, and just about half as much fats. The bread situation has lately grown worse, and the daily ration of the Italian amounts to little more than an equivalent of two small rolls. Potatoes are rationed locally. In Rome, for instance, the ordinary citizen, this summer, was allowed one small potato a day.

In industrial districts the food shortage makes itself particularly felt. Mussolini himself admitted this recently in a message to the workers of Milan. Nearly every day Italian newspapers contain appeals asking the public to be patient with those in charge of food distribution. One day Rome housewives find the fruit and vegetable markets empty. The next day women in Turin or Genoa search in vain for meat.

As a matter of fact, the first proper Food Offices to supervise rationing regulations and food distribution were set up only in August of this year. Italians who were asking for an explanation of this state of affairs were given one reason. It was stated bluntly in the annual report of one of the most

important Italian financial concerns, the Bank of Naples. It said: **'We Italians have made a mistake about the duration of this war, and the result of our miscalculation, which we have maintained for fifteen months, was that the most important requirements of the war effort have been neglected.'**

If this is a plausible reason for faults of organisation it is certainly no excuse for the extent of racketeering and profiteering going on in Fascist Italy to-day. **The Black Market is thriving.** Day by day scores of butchers, grocers, wine merchants, and innkeepers are taken to account before emergency tribunals. Restaurants and bars sell food and drink at exorbitant prices. Farmers who are ordered to sell their produce at fixed rates to the so-called Wheat Pools, which the Government established at the outbreak of the war, now prefer to sell on the Black Market. This Black Market has not only become a general problem, but one involving the leaders of the Fascist Party. **The cancer of corruption has penetrated deeply into the body of Fascism.**

SEVERE REVISION.

Officials of the Fascist Party have taken advantage of their special privileges. They have forged ration cards, hoarded foodstuffs, and sold stocks from the State Depôts. They have discredited the prestige of the Fascist Party and its Duce in the eyes of even the most tolerant Italian. Little more than a month ago Mussolini summoned the chiefs of the Fascist Party to his marble-walled study at the Palazzo Venezia. At the end of this conference he signed a decree expelling some sixty-six thousand members of the Party and dismissing scores of officials. A fortnight later he appointed two new regional inspectors and five provincial leaders of the Fascist movement. But the crisis is by no means over. Only a few days ago one of the Vice-Secretaries of the Fascist Party, Carlo Ravasio, said in a speech at Trieste: 'Party comrades: at present a severe revision of the Fascist Party's ranks is being made.'

The task of carrying out this 'revision' of the declining Fascist movement has fallen to a new man—to Vidussoni, Mussolini's twenty-six-year old Secretary of the Fascist Party. Vidussoni is a fanatic. He belongs to that young generation of Italians who only know Fascism, who have grown up in the Fascist mentality, fed by such empty phrases as 'Italian glory', 'living space', 'Italy's imperial mission', and so on. To-day these young Fascists are perhaps the most disappointed of all Italians. They are disgusted with the inefficiency, slackness, and corruption of the bigwigs. To Mussolini they might become dangerous. He, therefore, decided to take the wind out of their sails and appointed one of them, Vidussoni, his second in command. The indifference, the almost cynical attitude of many Italians to this war comes out in a quip which is current in Italy at the present moment. It runs: **'If England wins the war, we are losers; if Germany wins it, we are lost.'**

WHERE ARE THE DUCE'S SOLDIERS ?

Italy's present front-line army totals about 75 Divisions—something over a million men. In the two and a half years that Italy has been in the war it has lost nearly half its strength—as well as an empire.

Before General Alexander's present campaign began on October 25, we held 262,000 Italian prisoners. Now that figure considerably exceeds 300,000. It includes 80 Generals and complete staffs of dozens of Divisions.

Few armies in modern times have fought worse or suffered more severely in proportion to its size. Yet it would be wrong to suppose that it will fight badly in defence of its own land—supposing it gets a chance to do so.

At present there are some 25 Divisions of front-line troops in Italy and the Italian islands. After them come probably 750,000 second-line troops—the Fascist Militia and partially trained units.

Mussolini sent 10 Divisions to be butchered in Russia. From Albania across the Balkans to the Dodecanese he has spread 30 Divisions to act as policemen for the Axis. The remainder—10 to 11 Divisions—are in North Africa, the majority of them casualties.

This is how the Duce's soldiers have melted away in casualties.

General Wavell's Libyan Campaign.—Four regular Divisions, Four Black Shirt Militia Divisions and two Colonial Divisions.

In Eritrea, East Africa and Abyssinia.—Twelve Italian Divisions and 25 Colonial Divisions.

The Greek invasion.—Eleven Metropolitan Divisions.

General Auchinleck's campaign.—Two Metropolitan Divisions.

General Alexander's Offensive.—Eight Metropolitan Divisions.

The Russian and the Balkan Campaign.—Five Divisions.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

12—12—42 to 18—12—42.

Russia.—In spite of winter conditions the battle of RUSSIA continues all along the battle-line and particularly at STALINGRAD and before MOSCOW.

In the factory area of STALINGRAD the position of the trapped Germans, some 130,000 men in number, is said to have deteriorated. The operations are restricted to artillery duels and to the dislodging of Germans from, and the destruction of, block-houses where they are trying to take shelter. The German army, hard pressed between the Volga and the Don, is awaiting reinforcements from the west.

Outside the city German resistance has stiffened near KOTELNIKOVO where the Russians are concentrating and the Germans have brought up reserves and are counter-attacking.

Another equally fierce struggle, under equally severe weather conditions, is going on before MOSCOW, round RZHEV and VELIKIYE LUKI, two of the German key-points to the approach to SMOLENSK. The enemy's counter-attacks are continuous and fierce, smacking of desperation.

Far up in the north German reinforcements are arriving at the MURMANSK front, from Northern NORWAY, but it is not known whether it is to deliver or to ward off an offensive.

A Russian break through is reported at Lake Ilmen.

On the right flank of the VORONEJ front Soviet forces have occupied some new vantage points.

Soviet troops have gained some ground north-east of TUAPSE.

El Agheila.—Stretching from MERSA BREGA on the coast for 25 miles to a sandy depression makes another EL ALAMEIN and here, as at EL ALAMEIN, Rommel took his stand, ensconced behind land-mines and machine-gun nests and backed by artillery and anti-tank guns in an attempt to defend the back-door to TUNISIA. Montgomery, following the same tactics as at EL ALAMEIN, attacked the coastal region at MERSA BREGA, the NOFILIA landing grounds, 90 miles west of EL AGHEILA and BES SUEDA, 15 miles below MERSA BREGA. Rommel, preferring flight to battle, abandoned EL AGHEILA on Dec. 13 and is now in full retreat, anywhere between 40 and 90 miles from EL AGHEILA, only maintaining a weak rear guard action in the name of opposition. The progress of the 8th Army is being slowed by means of land-mines.

Tunisia.—It is now revealed that when General Nehring opened his offensive in TUNISIA the opposing Allied Force—the British First Army—in no way comparable, in strength, to the 8th Army, was relatively small. Consequently Nehring was able to halt the British troops initially and even to push them slightly back. But the risks won in dashing ahead had well been repaid. Had the First Army waited for reinforcements, the Germans would have established themselves in TUNISIA and even pushed themselves into ALGERIA by now.

At present General Nehring is attempting to gain the town of MEDJEZ EL BAB, as much as the Allies are determined on holding it. The first round has gone to General Anderson who has so far repelled a two-pronged enemy tank attack from TEBURBA and MASSICAULT.

French troops have captured an important position west of SIDI-BOUSID in Central TUNISIA.

French guerillas operating between SFAX and SOUSSE have destroyed a German troop train.

The total of enemy losses inflicted by His Majesty's submarines in Mediterranean waters since the opening of the North African offensive, is cruisers—one sunk, four hit; destroyers—one sunk, one probably sunk, one damaged and three hit; Tankers-4 sunk; supplyships—9 sunk, 1 probably sunk and 5 damaged; merchantmen—4 hit while carrying troops or supplies to TUNISIA. 62 Axis ships, Mr. Richard Casey, Minister of State in the MIDDLE EAST, revealed on Dec. 15, have been sunk in the past 6 months in the Mediterranean; he added that quite as many ships again have been damaged, and that figures of such sinkings are 'now going up on a very rapidly mounting curve.'

New Guinea.—After the brilliant operations at GONA Mac. Arthur's forces entered BUNA on Monday December 14th. Two Japanese cruisers and three destroyers effected a small landing at the Mumbari and the Kumusi estuaries in the BUNA area under ceaseless attack by the Allied air forces. On December 15th heavy fighting is raging round the BUNA Mission, the BUNA air-field and the contiguous Cape ENDAIADERE. The Allies have made a further advance at SANANANDA.

Solomons.—On December 9 American planes attacked enemy surface vessels in FAISI HARBOUR and the aerodrome at MUNDA. On December 12 a Japanese tanker was attacked and another was damaged off North SOLOMONS. On December 13 U. S. patrols on GUADALCANAR destroyed two Japanese machine-gun positions. BUIN Island and MUNDA were also raided from the air.

China.—Three Japanese warships, fully loaded with troops, were beaten off while making attempts to land off the south-western part of LUICHOW Peninsula. The enemy attacks in Central HUPEH were repulsed. The Japanese attempts to cross the Salween into YUNNAN have been defeated.

Burma.—On December 11 R. A. F. raided stores and docks at RANGOON, and a naval auxiliary vessel at PORT BLAIR. On December 13 NAMTI and the aerodrome at MAGWE were bombed. On December 14 MYOHAUNG was attacked. On December 15, HUKAWNG Valley and MAINGKWAN village were attacked.

India.—On December 10 and December 15 CHITTAGONG was raided thrice by the Japanese. On both the days the casualties were slight. The civil population took shelter calmly. The enemy's losses were 3|planes destroyed for each day, with several more damaged on the second day.

Miscellaneous.—(1) A single party Government is to be set up in FRANCE under Laval, Dunish Marcel Deat of the Fascist Party giving his support.

(2) General Leitzler succeeds General Von Halder as Chief of the German Staff.

(3) Mr. William Phillips has been appointed President Roosevelt's Personal Representative in INDIA or, to use diplomatic language, 'near the Government of INDIA,' with the personal rank of Ambassador. The reasons for the appointment are said to be the strategic importance of INDIA, the presence of American forces in INDIA and the interest of AMERICA in the Indian question.

(4) German Gauleiters (District Party Leaders) have been made Reich Defence Commissioners, additional functions of the State and the Army being transferred to them.

(5) The Greek Minister for Information has announced that over 100,000 inhabitants of ATHENS, out of a million population had perished in the 15 months of Axis occupation.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

7—12—42. (Monday).

EUROPE (6 Allied planes missing).

DAY:—

3 enemy ships off BRITANNY (France).
Military camps and barges in NORMANDY and the LOW COUNTRIES.

NIGHT:—

Laying mines in enemy coastal waters.

NORTH AFRICA (2 Allied planes missing).

Landing ground at MARBLE ARCH (7 enemy planes shot down).
MISURATA (Libya).
The aerodrome near HOMS.
Docks and the sea plane base at BIZERTA. (3 axis planes destroyed).
The TUNIS-GABES railway.
Transport aircraft over LAMPEDUSA Island

RUSSIA.

Air combats and aircraft all over the entire RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Enemy position in the BUNA-GONA pocket.
The aerodrome and harbour at GASMATA (N. Britain).
Storage dumps at KAVIENG (N. Ireland).
The aerodrome at LAE (N. Guinea).

8—12—42 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (1 Allied plane missing).

DAY:—

Industrial and railway objectives in HOLLAND and North-west GERMANY.
Railway targets, barges and enemy airfields in Northern FRANCE and BELGIUM.
TURIN (Italy).

NORTH AFRICA.

The aerodrome at MARBLE ARCH.
Enemy positions at EL AGHEILA.
TRIPOLI.
Docks at BIZERTA.
Aerodrome at TUNIS.
GABES.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the entire Eastern Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap position near BUNA (N. Guinea).
An aerodrome at LAE (N. Guinea).
Reconnaissance over RABAUL (2 enemy planes shot down).
GASMATA (N. Britain).

9—12—42 (Wednesday).

EUROPE.

Locomotives, goods trains, barges, aerodromes and several tugs in Northern FRANCE, and LOW COUNTRIES.
Industrial objectives in HOLLAND.
The factory area in TURIN (Italy).

NORTH AFRICA.

Landing grounds behind the enemy positions at EL AGHEILA.
The aerodrome at HOMS and TRIPOLI.
The docks at LA GOULETTE.
Air field at TUNIS.
A merchant vessel off SOUSSE (Tunisia).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Eastern battlefield.

FAR EAST.

Jap position in BUNA-GONA area.
The aerodrome at LAE (N. Guinea).

10—12—42 (Thursday).

DAY:—

EUROPE.

Enemy shipping off the BELGIUM coast.
Railway targets in Northern FRANCE.
A railway tunnel 40 miles west of PARIS.

NORTH AFRICA.

The docks at BIZERTA.
The aerodrome at TUNIS.
Landing grounds behind (west of) EL AGHEILA.
MISURATA (Libya).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all over the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Reconnaissance over RABAUL (N. Britain).
BUNA-GONA area (N. Guinea).

11—12—42 (Friday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

Shipping off the BELGIUM coast.
Railway targets in Northern FRANCE.
Shipping, Naval units and the harbour at NAPLES (Italy).
TURIN (Italy).

NORTH AFRICA.

Sweeps over EL AGHEILA.
Landing grounds behind EL AGHEILA.
The aerodromes at TUNIS and BIZERTA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the entire battle Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap convoy off GUADALCANAR (Solomons).
MUNDA (N. Georgia).
The aerodromes at LAE.
The docks at RANGOON.
Port BLAIR (An'amans).

12—12—42 (Saturday).

EUROPE (one allied plane missing).

DAY:—

Targets in ROUEN (France).
Airfields and canal barges in HOLLAND.

NORTH AFRICA.

Enemy position in the EL AGHEILA area.
Landing grounds behind EL AGHEILA.
Aerodrome at TUNIS.
The docks and warehouses at BIZERTA.
Aerodromes in SICILY.

RUSSIA.

(For the week 5-12-42 to 12-12-42:—Russians lost 156 planes; Axis lost 407 planes.)

Air combats and aircraft on the ground all along the entire Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Railway yards at MANDALAY (Burma).
Ry. station at NABA (Burma).
Jap position in the BUNA-GONA pocket.
The aerodrome at BUIN (Solomons).

13—12—42. (Sunday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

Barges, tugs, troop trains and locomotives in FRANCE and LOW COUNTRIES.
Enemy Shipping off the coast of NORWAY.

NORTH AFRICA.

The aerodrome at MARBLE ARCH.
Rommel's forces near EL AGHEILA.
SOUSSE.
The airfield at TUNIS
The harbour at PALERMO (Sicily).

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the battlefield.

FAR EAST.

Enemy positions at BUNA (2 Jap planes shot down).
Aerodromes at LAE and SALAMAUA.

14—12—42 (Monday).

EUROPE.

DAY:—

Railway targets in Northern FRANCE and BELGIUM.

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

8—12—42 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid anywhere in BRITAIN.

NORTH AFRICA.

Allied forward positions in TUNISIA.

RUSSIA.

Russian positions in the Central and STALINGRAD areas.

FAR EAST.

No information available.

9—12—42 (Wednesday)

BRITAIN.

No air raid anywhere.

NORTH AFRICA.

BONE (Algeria).

RUSSIA.

Air combats over the STALINGRAD area.

FAR EAST.

CHITTAGONG (India) (3 enemy planes destroyed).

10—12—42 (Thursday)

BRITAIN.

A place on tho east coast of BRITAIN (1 axis plane shot down).

NORTH AFRICA.

TEBURBA (Tunisia).

FAR EAST.

The airfield in GUADALCANAR (Solomons).

11—12—42 (Friday).

BRITAIN.

Coastal areas off North-east ENGLAND.

NORTH AFRICA.

TEBURBA and MEDJEZ EL BAB (both in Tunisia).

FAR EAST.

No information available.

12—12—42 (Saturday).

BRITAIN.

No air raid.

NORTH AFRICA.

Allied forward positions in TUNISIA.

RUSSIA.

Russian position west of RZEV.

FAR EAST.

No air activity.

13—12—42 (Sunday).

BRITAIN.

No air activity.

RUSSIA.

STALINGRAD area.

FAR EAST.

Reconnaissance over GUADALCANAR (Solomons).

14—12—42 (Monday).

BRITAIN.

North-east coast of BRITAIN (2 axis planes lost).

NORTH AFRICA.

MADJEZ EL BAB.

RUSSIA.

Air combats over the STALINGRAD area (42 German planes shot down).

FAR EAST.

No information available.

SIDE LIGHTS.

TWO VICTORIES: **El Agheila**.—Two events stand out in the week—Rommel's 'fast' retreat from EL AGHEILA which beginning on Sunday (13th) continues, and the fall of BUNA on Monday (14th). The first shatters once again the legend of Rommel's invincibility or rather proves Rommel's vulnerability and the second severs one of the feelers of the Japanese octopus in the vicinity of AUSTRALIA.

EL AGHEILA, a tiny village in the African desert, has become historic as the scene of great events in two years. Here in February 1941 Wavell's brilliant advance ended; in March 1941 it was evacuated by British troops, only to drive Rommel back again to it in January 1942. From here Rommel rallied and advanced to EL ALAMEIN to be driven back once again not only here but beyond. This time, while it is a British victory none the less, Rommel did not dare even to join battle. Without offering the slightest resistance he has fled. The better part of valour, Rommel evidently thought, was discretion.

But nearly two weeks ago Montgomery had foretold this in an interview in which he said confidently, 'the battle about to begin will be one of the most decisive battles in history. It will be the turning point of the war. We shall drive the Boche out of AFRICA.'

At dawn on Sunday advanced elements of the 8th Army moved into MERSA MERGHA smashing the northern anchor of the enemy's EL AGHEILA line, while one of the British patrols threatened his flank near BES SUEDA, 15 miles below MERSA MERGHA. Pulling out what remained of his guns, tanks and transport Rommel started on his flight. It is now apparent that he has already fled far from EL AGHEILA, though exactly how far it is not known; nor is it possible to conjecture at present where he will try his next stand, whether at MISURATA, 380 miles to the west or at TRIPOLI, 120 miles still further away. During his retreat he may attempt a rear-guard-action at the *Wadis*, using the natural obstacles of the terrain, to delay the 8th Army's drive.

Buna, also a village, but of vital strategic importance, fell on Monday to General Mac. Arthur's troops. The Japanese made a desperate last hour effort to retain it. Two Japanese cruisers and three destroyers, which sought to effect a landing at the Mumbari and the Kumusi estuaries in the BUNA area, were either sunk or disabled by the Allied Air Force.

The fall of BUNA, after the capture of GONA some days ago, is the first considerable piece of territory to be won back from the enemy in the Pacific.

The fall of BUNA does not constitute, as yet, the *capture* of BUNA nor the entire subjugation of PAPUA, the southern part of NEW GUINEA. BUNA

village has been occupied but heavy fighting is still going on round the BUNA Mission and the BUNA air-field.

The London Times sees in the event the first signs of the inevitable collapse of JAPAN. It wisely observes :—

'Air power has again proved its cardinal importance. Naval power has maintained sea-lanes by which alone the weapons of victory could be assembled. Japanese conquests can be made to yield to a properly planned and boldly directed counter-offensive.'

It is true that PAPUA and GUADALCANAR are only two points in the vast barrier stretching from INDIA to mid-Pacific and it is also true that a fresh threat to AUSTRALIA may yet develop from TIMOR. 'Nevertheless it is reasonable to regard the recent events both at GUADALCANAR and PAPUA as the first foreshadowing of the inevitable downfall of JAPAN before the massed strength and unwearying courage of the Allied Nations.'

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WELCOME NEWS AND A WARNING. As the year closes, we are happy to learn on good authority that the Japanese threat to INDIA is now very much less than it was 7 or 8 months ago. This was pointed out not only by H. E. the Governor of MADRAS and Mr. Rutherford, Adviser, in their recent speeches but by General Wavell also, during the interview he granted to the Press on Monday at MADRAS. This is welcome news, so far as it goes. No doubt the recent South Pacific events in the SOLOMONS and NEW GUINEA coupled with the Axis disasters in North AFRICA have provided substantial grounds to give the assurance. Mr. Rutherford stated as his reason that the Japanese fleet was held up in the south-west Pacific. The Commander-in-Chief who had just returned from a tour of inspection added 'If the Japanese attacked CEYLON the Southern Army can foil it...... If the Japanese undertake any attempt on INDIA they will get a warm reception'. No doubt, he knew what he was talking about. But he, as well as the others, also pointed out that it would be sheer folly to neglect or relax our preparations. When hard pressed the Japanese may still attempt a diversion on some part of INDIA— witness the meaningless attacks on CHITTAGONG for instance, for which INDIA should be prepared in every way.

This was the reason why Mr. Rutherford, in his ELLORE speech gave a most needed warning ; he said,

'Sabotage is not the way to freedom. To take part in such acts especially in time of war is nothing short of treachery. What those who are encouraging are hastening is not the freedom of INDIA but its slavery, a slavery the like of which is unheard of in the annals of world history.'

A MONTH AHEAD. To critics who complain of Allied slowness before TUNIS Mr. Henry Stimson, U. S, Secretary for War has done well to point out that, as a matter of fact, the Allied advance in the North AFRICA has been a month ahead of schedule thanks to the daring of the operations, Admiral Darlan's help not only in stopping French resistance but in securing their assistance also proving an accelerating factor. The Allied forces raced across the continent ill-provided with communications and despite lack of air-fields. If the action had not been so swift as it was the Axis would have dug themselves in, in TUNIS. The present frontal operations are in the nature of feeling out for the enemy and harassing his operations, while air-fields were being laid and other preparations were being made. Everything has happened better than was expected.

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OUR OLD AND TRUSTED FRIEND is De Gaulle's warm tribute of praise to BRITAIN following on the announcement that BRITAIN has handed over to the Fighting French MADAGASCAR which she fought and won recently. This she has done in fulfilment of her promise to restore the FrenchEmpire to the true representatives of FRANCE. Added to this comes the significant report of special honours paid to General Catroux, the Fighting French Commander at recent military inspections and parades at MARAKESH, AGADIR and CASABLANCA at which Gen. Giraud, Gen. Nogues, Vice Admiral Michelier, Commander-in-Chief of the American Forces in MOROCCO and Gen. Patton were present. It suggests an all-Empire-French collaboration of fighting French with North and West French AFRICA, Darlan or no Darlan, and in defiance of Laval. Laval's mephistophelian threat from the Metropolitan side of FRANCE is despicable. 'You have known the Laval,' he says, 'who was a legendary Parliamentary figure. It is a new Laval you see before you to-day.' Yes it is unfortunately, a new Laval—the slave of BERLIN and the foe of FRANCE. The only way he knows to retrieve FRANCE is a German victory—the wretch.

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GERMANY AND FRANCE. A BERLIN broadcast in Hindustani has the audacity to state that GERMANY has been very kind and generous to FRANCE during the past two years, when 'every sort of liberty was given to the French people.' Here are some of GERMANY's favours to FRANCE during the period. Having made her militarily and industrially impotent she has forced her to become an agricultural country. She must also export her produce to GERMANY and send her workers to German war factories. During the first half of 1942 GERMANY extorted 315 million sterling which is three times the cost of the upkeep of the cost of occupation and one and a half-times FRANCE's pre-war budget. The French Parliament

has been dissolved, the French Press has been gagged and the French leaders have been imprisoned. Finally the seizure of unoccupied FRANCE and the tragedy of TOULON go to complete the misery and the humilation which the Nazis have heaped on her.

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MALTA. The ROME Radio spoke the truth for once when it said, in August last, that the pride of the *Regia Aeronautica* was at stake without the neutralisation of MALTA and we may now say the same of the *Luftwaffe* also. After having successfully defied and defeated the combined enemy efforts at neutralisation for well over 30 months, as we would calculate, it has now changed from a beleaguered island into an offensive base. Since the landing of the First Army in North AFRICA MALTA-based aircraft, in well over 500 sorties, have sunk 4 ships, damaged 11 others, destroyed 40 aircraft in the air and damaged or destroyed 82 more on the ground. MALTA is the R. A. F.'s Mediterranean's key base from whence she strikes the enemy in GREECE (350 miles), NAPLES (350 miles), TRIPOLITANIA (200 miles), and SICILY (80 miles). Her long-range aircraft are bombing enemy positions in TUNISIA. Even in her beleaguered condition she hit back on NAPLES, BRINDISI, CATANIA, SYRACUSE, LICATA, MARSALA and PALERMO.

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HITLER'S POGROM cannot, in its cold and calculated horror, be matched, the *Times* reminds us, in all the history of persecution. The systematic extermination of the Jews is only part of the pogrom. Since 1939 the same 'methodical ferocity' has been applied to the Poles. The atrocities committed in invaded RUSSIA are the most monstrous of all crimes. The martyrdom of the Czechs, Serbs, and Greeks conform to the same pattern. In fact no land or people in EUROPE have escaped the terror. If any proof were still wanted that we have reached a crisis in civilisation here it is.

The *Times* suggests as a temporary remedy and palliative that every possible assistance be given to emigration from these unfortunate lands, though it is aware that effective relief is possible only after real victory. Meanwhile, the present atrocities will act as a spur to the war effort.

That retribution will follow crime is not only the general pledge given by all Allied Governments but is one of the certainties of the war.

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AMERICAN PRODUCTION has been truly colossal. According to a report published by the American Office of War Information, the U. S. A. will have produced at the end of the year

49,000 aeroplanes, 32,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, 17,000 anti-aircraft guns, and 8,200,000 tons of merchant shipping. Compared with President Roosevelt's programme laid down, as soon as the U. S. entered the war, the production falls short of aircraft by 11,000 but exceeds in shipping by 200,000 tons. The deficit is due to the substitution, in the middle of the year, of long-range aircraft, which take longer to build, for fighters. Shipping construction constitutes a marvellous record. In 11 months American shipyards have completed 625 vessels totalling 6,890,000 tons while the total production of 1938 for the *whole world* was only 3,038,593 tons and 1938 was itself a record year for the world since 1921. 400 new Liberty ships have been built since PEARL HARBOUR, the time for construction going down from 46 days a ship to 3½ The output of 3 ships a day will soon become 4. Though naval construction must remain a secret we have the word of Admiral King, Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Fleet that the tonnage will soon be doubled. *Bunker Hill* which was launched a few days ago was launched in 15 weeks and *New Jersey*, the heaviest battleship constructed yet and launched on the following day, was completed 18 months ahead of schedule.

American aircraft production is now ahead of German, Japanese and Italian production put together.

The American programme for 1943 is 81,000 planes, 53,000 tanks and 29,000 anti-aircraft guns.

Speaking on Dec. 11, the first anniversary of GERMANY's declaration of War against AMERICA, General R. P. Hartle. Deputy Commander of the European Theatre of Operations of the U. S. Army declared 'With our mighty Allies we march against the common enemy. Each step spells Hitler's ultimate destruction. In the 12 months just past, American production has swelled the terrrible flood of ships, planes, tanks and guns now engulfing the forces of evil, resolutely confronted by us. On this anniversary, marked with hope for us, we ponder over the bitter reflections of Hitler, as he comprehends the formidable combination of Powers against which he has set himself and his helpelss people.'

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ALLIED AID TO RUSSIA. In a lying broadcast the ROME radio states that 'despite Anglo-American promises the aid to RUSSIA has been nominal.' But here are the figures of shipments from BRITAIN and the U. S. A. in the past 12 months by the Arctic route alone :—

Aircraft—3,052 ; Tanks—4,084 ; Motor Vehicles—30,031 ; Aviation spirit and petrol—52,000 tons ; Fuel oil—66,000 tons ; Machine tools and metals—831,000 tons.

BURMA WILL BE AVENGED. General Wavell's earlier announcement, that the reoccupation of BURMA was constantly in his mind, was echoed by the Prime Minister in his message last week to INDIA'S armed forces, wherein he asked them to prepare ceaselessly for the day when they will expel the intruder from the peaceful lands he has overrun. General Wavell also reiterated recently, 'that the day will come when the Burmese reverses will be avenged. I can assure you I am doing all in my power to hasten the approach of that day'. We have also a glimpse of the vast preparations that are going forward. As Mr. Churchill stated in the message great forces have been assembled within the area of the INDIA Command, drawn from the peoples of 'INDIA, BRITAIN, AMERICA, CHINA, BURMA, NEPAL, AFRICA and CEYLON—a symbol of the outraged world's resistance to the forces of evil and aggression'. Deep reconnaissances have been carried into Burmese territory and the Allied forces have been trained to the tactics of jungle warfare to beat the enemy at his own game.

What is JAPAN doing? There are indications that she may try again to cross the Salween in which she failed earlier in the year and attempt an attack on KUNMING, the vital centre of communication now left between CHINA and INDIA. It is reported she has assembled some seven divisions in the BURMA—YUNNAN border, with collapsible rubber-boats, pontoons and other accessories.

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NUTRITION. It is remarkable that in the midst of the distractions of war BRITAIN has not lost sight of the problems of social service. One of them is nutrition. The researches of the British Medical Association had already done much to improve public and individual health in pre-war years, but to the present Ministry of Food belongs the credit of formulating and working out a national policy. Its immediate task, though confined to the present needs is based on scientific nutrition and looks forward to a future when men and nations will he fed in order to secure better health and living. In the scheme of the Ministry babies and children naturally come first, because, as Lord Woolton said there must be no battle between the child and the adult. The Ministry of Food buys up all the home produce and 90 per cent of the food imports, the two being correlated. Imports are regulated by shipping space and according to nutrition value; for instance concentrated orange juice is preferred to oranges and other fruits. A Scientific Food Committee advises the Cabinet on food values and Lord Horden's appointment, since June 1940, as Personal Adviser to the Ministry of Food shows how the greatest of ENGLAND'S physicians are consulted on the subject. A Research Kitchen experiments on the nutritive value of new foods. The slogan is vitamins now, whereas it was calories in the last war and every

attempt is made to supply these valuable elements through natural food, such as vegetables, grass-fed butter, cod-liver oil and National Wheat Flour, instead of in tablets and capsules. Care is taken against adulteration. Meat and milk are distributed under the direct agency of the Ministry of Food. Economy of transport is secured by 'Zoning' or confining the distribution, as far as possible, to the region around the areas of production and the ports of import. Under the scheme of Points Rationing each individual has freedom to buy what he requires but within limits. Lease Lend is used not only to secure food but also to increase the import of nutritive food, while reducing that of less nutritive food. 86% of the Nation's Children are supplied with milk under the National Milk Scheme, with 26% receiving it free. Fruit juice and cod-liver oil are also distributed free to children under two. Over 3 million boys and girls receive milk at school. Heavy industry workers, invalids, nursing mothers and vegetarians receive special consideration. Communal feeding and Emergency meal centres are being conducted on scientific lines. And with all these multifarious and engrossing duties of the present, the future has not been forgotten. Education on Nutrition is freely and widely given so that Lord Woolton could say with confidence, 'we are making the future every day'.

He has also added significantly, 'One thing is certain, the future advances will be made in co-operation with the other United Nations, which means, as Sir William Jowitt has explained, 'Our aim must be to raise the standard of living throughout the world and as a first step to raise the nutritional standard of the world.' For this the food resources of GREAT BRITAIN and the U. S. A. will be pooled—This is the Atlantic Charter.

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AIR SLANG. Air-war has produced its own set of slang terms of which we sample a few below. An air-raid is a form of *blitz* which results in children *vackies* (evacuees) and *browned* adults. *Mona* is the morning siren or *wailing winnie* and *Clara* is the bonny lass signalling the all-clear. Search-lights are *fire-works* and their diffused glare a *bearded lady*. The A. A. gun is *ack-ack*, an enemy plane is *Jerry*, the balloon, *rat-trap*; the A. A. barrage, *flying-elephant* and aerial torpedoes *flying-pigs*. German bombers when they release bombs *lay eggs*, while the R. A. F. returning after a raid *leaves visiting cards*. An *erk* is an aircraft-mechanic; *Op* is operator; *Wom* is the wireless operating man, and *snoops*—the service Police. *Mets* is the meteorologist who knows all about *cu* (cumulus) and *muck* (dirty weather). We have *Spits* (spitfires), *Hurries* (Hurricanes *Lizie* (Lysander). *Maggie* (Miles Magister) and *Wimpey* (Wellington); and last and not least '*He, Me* and *You*', the Heinkel, the Messerschmitt and the Junker.

THE ENEMY IS ON THE DOWN GRADE.

(Gen. Henry Arnold, Chief of the U. S. Army Air Force.)

Randolph Field, Dec. 13.

We have a secret weapon or two up our aerial sleeves that will deal paralysing blows to our enemies. Our fighters and bombers are steadily increasing in range, speed, fire power and bomb loads.

I will also state that entirely new battle weapons are on the way. We will soon put on a special demonstration for Hitler—and Hirohita. We don't think they are going to like it either.

Between Feb. 1 and Dec. 5 this year United States Army Air Force definitely destroyed in air combat 928 Axis planes and probably 276, having lost 130 of their own with 104 missing. Hence the ratio of planes lost was about four to one in America's favour.

MOUNTING PRODUCTION.

To date they had had over 1,063 separate sorties against the Germans during which they had definitely destroyed 293 German planes and probably another 150.

Both the German and the Japanese Air Forces are on the down grade. They have passed the peak. We are just approaching the peak in plane production and combat crew training. Our plane production alone is more than that of the Germans and the Japanese combined.

The Army Air Force planes had sunk 51 Axis ships and probably 21 more and damaged 155.

To-day we have our bombers and fighters working in eight combat zones. Each day sees our numbers increase and the striking power building up. Within a few months the Germans and the Italians will be feeling the impact of these hundreds of planes dropping bombs, not one or two nights a week, but every day and night.

We will hit their submarines while being constructed and out in the wide oceans. We will hit their transport, their industries, their munitions plants, their aeroplane and tank factories. They will realise what true war means to-day.

WHAT BRITAIN HAS DONE

(From the Indian News-Letter)

Let us take a look at the job the English are doing and have done, writes Walter Karig, in the course of an article to the New York paper *Liberty*. If they had not done it so superlatively well, Hitler would be in Windsor Castle

to-day. He might even be in Ottawa, to hearten his troops invading the United States. Remember that for more than two years the concentrated Nazi might and power has been perched only 18 miles from England, and that the island has been under almost continuous bombardment all that time. What the British are doing and have done is of tremendous importance to each and every one of us who are their partners in this war and in the peace to come. It is also an object lesson in what 'all-out war' means. Everything in Britain is mobilised for the winning of the war—everything and everybody. **Two out of every three persons—not men alone but women and children too—who are able-bodied and between the ages of 14 and 65 are working full time in the armed forces, in civilian defence, or in war industries.** Every able-bodied male between 18½ and 51 has been drafted into the armed forces unless irreplaceable in an essential industry, Seven million British women have been registered for the draft. Unmarried women between 20 and 30 are being sent into the uniformed auxiliary services of the army, navy and air force. Women of any age can be drafted for war work. Already 5,500,000 are toiling in the munitions industries, and millions of other housewives are working part time. Every person able to walk is trained in some duty during air raids. There are 1,500,000 trained civilian defence workers, 4,400,000 fire-fighters, 2,000,000 invasion-repelling Home Guards—all civilians who undertake these duties after the day's turn in mill, mine, or field is finished. Industrially, the 6,500,000 unionized war workers cannot leave their jobs nor can they be dismissed without Government permission. One home in every five has been destroyed or damaged by bombs, and more than 44,000 civilians have been killed in air raids.

AID TO RUSSIA

All right. What are these British accomplishing with all this daily régime of blood, sweat and tears? **Last year we sent the British about 2,500 aeroplanes. Britian sent out to Allied war fronts 9,781 of her own manufacture. We sent them about 200 tanks; they put 3,000 into action.** Sure, we are doing better this year, tremendously better, and the best is yet to come. But the same things are true of the British. Their production of aeroplanes has doubled in the last 12 months. A pair of shoes has to last the average British wearer, strictly rationed on clothing, two or three years. But that is because the British have sent some 4,000,000 pairs to Russia. For every aeroplane England imports from the United States she exports four of her own manufacture to Russia. She has sent the Red Army 2,000 tanks in eight months, British railroad shop workers did a year's work in ten weeks to build 1,000 wagons for the Trans-Persian line, which American engineers completed to carry British and American supplies from the Persian Gulf to the Caucasus. To amplify this transportation, the British built an automotive assembly plant on the Persian Gulf, and every month it turns out 200 big

trucks which are loaded with supplies and delivered, complete, to the Soviet forces. On top of all that, Britain is maintaining an army of more than 2,000,000 men, is equipping and supporting military and naval units of the Free French Norwegian, Polish and Netherlands Goverments in exile, and is not doing, a bad job with its own navy.

AXIS PROPAGANDA.

No one could say that this has not been an interesting month, November, not only for students of strategy ; for students of propaganda too. We've had three years of watching how Goebbels, and his staff deal with success. This is our first real chance of watching them deal with defeat. One thing, I think, is quite certain. They didn't expect these North African knocks. They didn't expect Rommel to be kicked about, as he has been, by the 8th Army, they didn't expect any Allied force to land, and still less, to mop up the enemy so quickly, on the other coast. If one needs any further proof that we brought off a strategic suprise, here it is. The Axis propaganda people were quite unprepared to meet the new situation.

FLAT DENIAL OF DEFEATS.

Their first reaction was more or less instinctive. They just denied that they'd suffered a defeat at all. I mentioned last week why they did it, and how they did it ; since then, things have developed a good deal. They have developed for two reasons. First, because events in Africa have reached a pitch, when it would be useless to pretend nothing much had happened ; second, because the Nazis have had time to pull themselves together, and work out something more elaborate than a series of denials. This more elaborate plan has been in operation now for several days. Its chief feature is a simple trick, long used by conjurers and pick pockets. The conjurer makes a lot of flourishes with one hand ; while you are watching it, he plants the vital card with his other. The pick pocket points to some distant roof top ; while you're gazing at it, he steals your watch. The German propagandist refers incessantly to the U-boats. While people are thinking about that, they can't at the same time be thinking about Allied progress on both sides of North Africa.

DRAWING RED HERRINGS.

The German broadcasters have always made the most of their U-boats campaign, and they have often used it before to distract attention from unpleasant news—unpleasant that is, for the Germans. Whenever they fail to fulfil a promise, whenever they suffer an unquestionable set-back, nearly always there's an increase in the number of special announcements proclaiming

submarine successes. If you did'nt know the trick, you'd think the coincidence little short of marvellous.

Last week's flood of special announcements must have gone near being the record. The further Rommel retreated, the closer the Allies drew to Bizerta, the more frequent and the more extravagant these announcements became. On the German Home Service, fanfares seemed to be played more often than any other sort of music. Last Saturday, one special announcement about sinking was actually broadcast in the period usually reserved for the High Command *communiqué*. Berlin broadcasts abroad also put this heavy emphasis on the U-boats and their supposed traps. Of course, losses are inseparable from a great amphibious undertaking, like the Allied invasion of North Africa, but even taking this into account, it was patent that the German claims were being inflated and over boosted. They were put forward, they are still being put forward, in the hope that listeners would turn their backs on North Africa, and instead look out to sea.

EVENTS SHOW UP LIES.

There was a time when this trick might have worked pretty well. The peculiar nature of U-boat warfare helps dishonest propaganda. It gives an opportunity of putting over lies which listeners can't possibly check at the time, but in due course events may show them up, and by odd coincidence, the African invasion itself is showing Berlin's past lies on the subject of shipping losses. There must be many people in Germany, as well as elsewhere, who are asking themselves: "If the Nazis have been telling the truth for the last three years, if all their special announcements were true, how did the Allies have enough ships to carry out this immense African campaign". The people who have got on to this discrepancy are not likely to fall for exaggerated U-boat stories now. Their eyes must still be upon Africa.

ALLIED SUCCESS MINIMISED.

So the Nazi Propaganda plan includes a line to deal with them too. It can perhaps be summed up best in these words, which were actually broadcast by the German Radio on Sunday. 'The back door to the European Continent has been slammed in the face of the Allies.' Over and over again, the Nazi Radio is insisting that the Southern coast of Europe has become impregnable. 'The Fortress Europe', it said on Saturday 'is mobilised for defence and attack, in this sector as well.' Now, this of course, is an attempt to counter the suggestion that Southern Europe is, as we've begun to call it lately, 'the soft under side of the Axis.' 'No' say the Nazis, 'it is not the soft under side; not now, anyway. We have made it as hard as steel, and ready to resist any attack.' From this argument it would follow that, even if the Allies presently command the whole of the North African coast; even if it has to be admitted that they have achieved that measure of success, still

it isn't the right sort of success; it doesn't get them anywhere. It doesn't weaken, or imperil, the solid position of the Axis; it is irrelevant to the strategy of war. That is the second line of defence in the Nazi propaganda plan.

OLD TRICKS.

You can tell that this plan has been thought out carefully; and indeed, there was every reason for it to be. This is the biggest problem Geobbels has ever had to face, in my opinion even bigger than the German failure to live up to their boasts in Russia. Has he solved it? Is this new line going to get over? Well, that remains to be seen. At this early stage we can only guess at it, and I don't like guessing more than I can help. But it's not guess work, it's only recognising a fact, to say that the very form of Nazi propaganda was devised to boost Germany's possession of the initiative; not to explain why she hasn't got it. And again it's only recognising a fact to say that in this latest propaganda, though the pattern is new, the tricks are old, and each time they are played, more and more people are likely to see through them. After all, it would be fatal for the conjurer to perform before the same audience, or the pick pocket to rob the same person, every day of the week. Goebbels is going to have his work cut out; for the moment, we won't put it any higher than that.

WOMEN AVIATORS AND MECHANICS BACK UP THE FIGHTING MEN IN RUSSIA.

(*The Illustrated Weekly of India*).

Russia to-day is a force to be reckoned with. Besides the almost unlimited man-power, there are many thousands of women aviators and mechanics already in the field, with millions more in training. If Russia can put 12,000,000 men into Hitler's war, it is safe to say she can put ten million women into action should it be necessary.

The cynic who said that "the men made such a mess of the last war, they were going to send the women this time", may not be so wide of the mark as he imagined. Russian women are hardy and they make good soldiers, as the Germans know already. There is no lipstick and powder about them. They are born fighters.

To those who wonder why Russia enlists women as well as men into her army, let me say that there is no sex bar in the Soviet. A woman can be tinker, tailor, soldier or sailor, as she wishes. And the men are not jealous. There is a total equality and equal pay for equal work—something other Powers have been striving for years and haven't got.

In Russia, women are not rose-bud lipped, silk-stockinged helpers. The women of the Soviet Union are out to do a job of work, and make a good job of it too. And for that reason you find women labour wherever men labour. They work side by side—always with each other, never against.

You find the Russian woman in the mine, in the fields, in the factory, in the army—everywhere.

And you also find them in the home—after the day's work is done. In Russia the woman or girl with nothing in her fingers would be regarded merely as a 'passenger.' And the Soviet has no room for mere passengers. If we have a joy in living, we also have a real joy in work. If you multiply this axiom by a nation as large as ours, you can easily see what a tremendous pull it gives. Everybody, everywhere, is able to take his or her corner and see the job through.

The average Russian woman mechanic in Stalin's army is a force to be reckoned with. She can build tanks or aeroplanes, and drive them when built. And mention of tanks reminds one that well nigh a million tanks of one type or other are in use. Many that were employed as tractors on the land, but were convertible into army tanks at short notice, helped in the early days of the war.

R. A. F.'S FOUR-ENGINED BOMBER.

NO PART OF GERMANY SAFE FROM THE LANCASTER.

Peter Masefield. (*The Madras War Review*).

Four out-standing features contribute to make the new Avro-Lancaster four-motor heavy bomber the most formidable machine of its type in the world to-day.

The first of these is speed. The Lancaster can achieve a maximum speed little short of 300 m. p. h., even with full load. As a result a long chase must result if Axis fighters have to climb up and attempt to catch the Lancaster with little warning. The fighter may even run out of fuel before it can intercept. This high speed of the Lancaster has made it specially suitable for the long daylight raids in which it has won so much fame.

HUGE BOMB LOAD.

The second feature is the enormously heavy bomb load. A maximum load of 15,800 lb. of bombs can be carried in the huge bomb compartment, 33 feet long. There is stowage of the huge yellow 4,000 pounders packed in with an ssortment of 500 pounders and incendiaries to make up the weight. Or,

alternatively, half a dozen 2,000 pounders with more 500 lb. bombs can be accommodated.

This enormous maximum load can be carried for more than a thousand miles whereas with a load reduced to several tons the range goes up towards the 3,000 miles mark. No part of Germany is safe from the great striking power of the Lancaster.

The third feature is the powerful defensive armoury which it carries into battle. Four hydraulically operated gun turrets contain ten guns between them and all can be aimed with precision and turned at a touch of the hand even when a 300 miles an hour airstream is roaring past. The four guns in the tail are fed by long ammunition tracks extending along the sides of the rear fuselage so that in a long flight there is no danger of running short of ammunition.

CAN SMASH FIGHTER ATTACKS.

There are no blind spots on the Lancaster, except those inevitable from the small area blanketed by the fins and rudders. But that area is too small to shield an attacking fighter.

On one raid more than a dozen Lancasters set off from a station. All returned a few hours later, and when the bag was counted up they were found to have shot down four German fighters between them without loss.

Several bore many bullet holes and had been hit by cannon shells. But the Lancaster will stand an enormous amount of punishment. All the vital parts are armoured—in fact in all something like half a ton of armour plate is carried, some of it built in as an integral part of the structure.

The Lancaster is almost invulnerable to machine-gun fire and cannon shells have to hit a lucky part to bring it down.

There is a fourth strong point—production. Very careful planning before production began has made the Lancaster the easiest heavy bomber to build which is yet flying. **The man-hours—and the "woman-hours"—for 40 per cent of the workers on Lancaster production are girls—have been cut down to an extraordinary extent and far below the smallest figure believed possible not very long ago.** Just how far this saving in production time has been carried, the Axis would dearly love to know. So it cannot be told.

WIDELY SPREAD MANUFACTURE.

In one way production of the Lancaster suffers in comparison with what can be done in the United States. And that is because of the need for dispersal. In America vast single plants can be set up to turn out aircraft from one central point. In Great Britain that cannot be done because of the danger of bombing. A vast assembly shop, for instance, would be an ideal target.

So Lancaster production is very widely spread so that at no point could heavy, accurate bombing seriously block production. Yet so well organized

is the routine that the completely assembled components each with all its equipment installed, come together at the various major assembly points—and in an astonishingly short time fly away as complete machines.

The Royal Air Force is delighted with the Lancaster. It is described by experienced pilots as the best aeroplane they have ever flown—it is delightfully light on the controls and even with two motors out of action on one side it still performs well.

HAS EVERYTHING.

There is an instance in which a Lancaster, seriously hit by flak, struck the water and bounced three times before pulling clear and flying home across the North Sea with only two motors working, both on the same side.

By careful and inspired design, by fine workmanship and by that streak of luck which still enters aerodynamic science, Mr. Roy Chadwick, Avro's Chief Designer, has turned out a really exceptional machine—**an aeroplane which will go down to history. The Lancaster has got everything and it packs a terrific punch. In company with the other great four-motor bombers of the United Nations it is starting to set about that task of "scourging Germany" which Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris has promised to the Nazis.**

MUSSOLINI'S MAXIMS.

1. "To me Violence is perfectly moral—more moral than compromise or bargaining. Words are very fine things, but rifles, machine-guns, warships aeroplanes and cannon are still finer things."

2. "War is to man as maternity is to woman. I do not believe in perpetual peace."

3. "I hold out an olive branch, but it is one that springs from 8,000,000 bayonets."

4. "Between gold and iron, Machiavelli chose iron. In the dilemma 'gold or guns' we have already made our choice—guns."

ENEMIES ALL.

A story going round in Washington says that a couple of Swiss journalists arrested in Tokyo protested that they were neutrals.

"No ; you are Neutral enemies", replied a Tokyo Police officer.

"What do you call the United States and Great Britain ?" asked the unhappy Swiss.

"They are belligerent enemies."

"What are the Germans and Italians?"

"They are friendly enemies."

SAVE ALL SCRAP MATERIAL.

Scrap News, Bombay.

Have you ever done a thorough house cleaning in any of your departments? You would be surprised at the pile of scrap that would result scrap metal, waste paper, rubber. Incidentally, you would find that this house cleaning would not only contribute to good house keeping but you would be participating in the great drive for scrap material for war production industries. That precious metal which was lying idle in your backyards would soon get back into circulation where it would be of great value as war material. You would be providing the raw material so urgently needed, thus minimising the need for importation of such vital materials and also save shipping space.

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20-12-42	Kudumiyamalai ..	7.00 ,,	22-12-42	Panayappatti ...	7.00 ,,
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